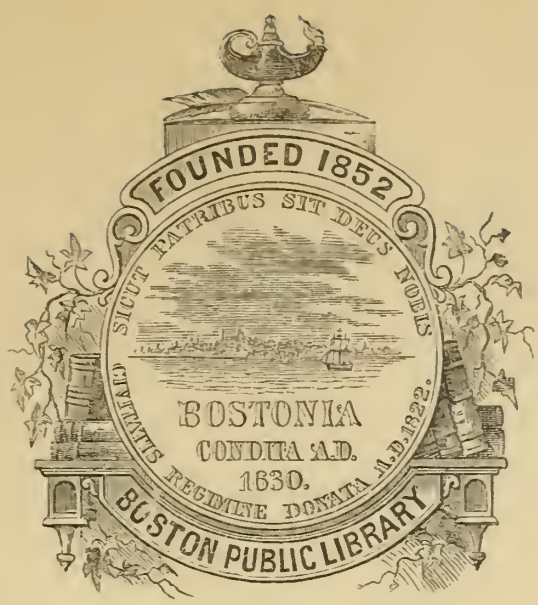
No. 7560a 9

THE TRUSTEES OF THE
PUBLIC LIBRARY
LUX
OMNIUM
CIVIUM
OF THE CITY OF
BOSTON
1852 1878



K. 1637 20

PAMPHLETS.

Emigration

+ 16089

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/workingmansrecol00unse

A WORKING MAN'S RECOLLECTIONS OF AMERICA.

The following pages are an attempt to convey a few of the observations and reflections of a member of the working class during a voyage to the United States, and a residence of five years in that country. Among all the works which have been written on America, but very few, if any, give us a clear idea of the habits, customs, and modes of thinking of the masses of the people; or if they do, the remarks they offer on the lower classes have been of too cursory or too general a nature to afford us much real or practical information. We are frequently told that our knowledge of American life is complete, that the subject is exhausted. It may, however, be urged as some apology for the present undertaking, that actions and objects, when viewed from an inferior position, often present a totally different appearance to that which strikes the lofty observer. How opposite the description of a sea-voyage by a cabin passenger would be from that of one of the "rejected of Providence" in the steerage! The gentleman may indeed tell us of smiling welcomes and graceful manners, while the plebeian is left to *feel* how often impudence is mistaken for independence, and to what extent the heaping of indignities on the head of a neighbour is considered the prerogative of universal freedom. Some writers have visited the most distinguished families of the large cities, and have told us what they said and what they did, how they dressed and how their houses were furnished; but they have not told us what is the real condition of those who make the furniture. Others, again, have given us spirited descriptions of domestic life, with the shocking deviations on the part of the natives from the rules of that stereotyped formality disguised under the designation *comme il faut;* in them we read of indecorous habits of speaking or sitting, while they have left unnoticed many unostentatious virtues and other active excellences of character.

In this necessarily brief sketch no pretensions can be made on the part of the writer to any but a very remote acquaintance with the elevated portion of American society: to show how the working classes live, to sketch a few features from the heterogeneous population of the great commercial communities, to describe, though perhaps imperfectly, what resources are open to the great mass of the people, what are their pursuits, recreations, economy, and means of improvement, with a few recollections of character and scenery, and to record sundry remembrances of a country, the residence in which was, on the whole, a happy period of life, is all he can hope to achieve.

I was a cabinet-maker by trade, and one of the many who, between the years 1825-35, expatriated themselves in countless thousands, drawn by the promise of fair wages for faithful work, and driven by the scanty remuneration offered to unceasing toil at home, and the overpowering pressure of the burthens imposed by the state, at a time when none of that sympathy which now occupies so large a portion of the public mind was shown to or felt for the working classes. Many an anxious look did poor parents at that day cast on the expectant faces of their little ones when seated round the table, on comparing the demand for bread with the small and uncertain supply, and with a shudder of horror half anticipated the piteous cry of hunger and misery. Work they did, work unceasingly; but apparently to no good; the wolf would never go away from the door, and was always heard scratching on the outside.

Bitter is the struggle between starvation and emigration; the struggle which uproots a man from the home of his fathers, deprives him, perhaps for ever, of all the cherished objects to which he has been accustomed from his infancy, and compels the abandonment of the most endeared associations under the harassing suspense that a new country and a new home, though fair in prospect, may not yield an equivalent. How many times is the resolution taken and given up; how eagerly is every means resorted to which may avert the painful necessity! The startling fact continually recurs, we have not enough to eat; the physical conquers the moral; the mind succumbs to the stomach—and the final decision is made. There are few parents who would not cheerfully endure the severest privations in their own persons rather than tempt the uncertainties of the most promising transmarine advantages; but they think of their families; they cannot bear the idea of dying and leaving their children homeless, mere waifs on the face of the earth. It would fill volumes to detail all the struggles and triumphs of principle and affection over local attachment, and to do justice to the virtuous resolves adopted and adhered to

amid privation, poverty, and hunger. When the resolution *is* taken, economy, which before was rigid, is strained to the utmost, in order to provide the sum necessary for the expenses of the voyage; the friends of the household, where possible, contribute something, either money or clothing; the bulky articles of furniture are sold, among which many objects are sacrificed which the family hoped to retain for generations; and thus, little by little, the fund is acquired; the household gods are scattered far and wide; the last farewells are spoken, and with heavy hearts the party depart for the port of embarkation.

On the 19th of April, 1834, I embarked with my family on board the ship Argus, lying in the London Docks, bound for New York. The day being Saturday, and the vessel about to sail punctually at the hour advertised, the decks presented a scene of the utmost confusion, occasioned by the hurried shipment of the ship's and passengers' stores. As usual, at the last moment many things were forgotten, to remedy which there was much running to and fro, accompanied by vociferous calls from the ship to persons on shore, but apparently to little purpose, as no one seemed to attend to the orders so hastily given. The passengers, however, were disposed to regard their difficulties with good humour, and to be of mutual service to each other, anticipating the five or six weeks of close companionship into which they were about to be thrown. It appeared to be tacitly understood that an ill-natured remark at the commencement might be a source of disquietude during the whole of the voyage.

Early the next morning we floated into the river, and were towed by a steam-tug to Gravesend, where we lay for two days, during which many of us went on shore and made various purchases, the necessity for which we had already learned from our short experience of life on shipboard. It is not necessary to detail the events of a voyage which had in them nothing peculiar, but I may notice such things as must affect emigrants, few of whom have ever before had any experience of a sea life. For instance, the anxiety which attends upon cooking in blowing weather: in nine cases out of ten the down draught from the foresail descends the galley funnel, which then smokes at the wrong end, or sudden gusts play such pranks with the "blacks," that gruel, or any other potion requiring to be constantly stirred, in an instant becomes of a very dingy and equivocal appearance, taxing severely the patience of the operator, whose eyes smart from the smoke, and then, while vexed and half blinded, a heavy sea breaks over the bows, drowns the fire, and away go pots and kettles, pork and pudding, rolling in all directions over the sloppy and greasy deck. Should none of these particular mishaps occur, the strong draught sends up such sharp tongues of flame that curl round the vessels on the fire and insidiously eat away the solder, or pierce holes in the sides, or the handles come off when lifted, so that in any case you seem doomed to lose your dinner, an accident which grievously disturbs one's equanimity. Nothing but cast-iron can be depended on for economy or safety. Much tact and foresight are required in the matter of cooking on board ship, so many have to be served, and generally all want to boil their kettles at once; fortunately the use of the ship's coppers is seldom refused, and in these pieces of beef or pork, with cabbage-nets filled with potatoes, are suspended by strings, at the outer extremities of which wooden labels are attached, marked with the owners' initials; and as but little ceremony is used at sea, it is no uncommon sight to see each one running off with his dinner dangling at the end of a string. Sometimes an unlucky lurch of the ship will send the whole party sprawling on the deck before they can reach their berths, where they are saluted with roars of laughter.

My own plan was to rise early and prepare our meals an hour in advance of our fellow-passengers, by which I avoided all the irritation and inconvenience of a crowd. After breakfast the children were made ready for an airing on deck when the weather permitted; then, if it were washing-day, I fastened the wet clothes to a cord and stretched them to dry in the main rigging. Sometimes, if it was blowing weather, I took a turn at the wash-tub myself; and when these domestic matters had been accomplished, I sat for an hour or two on deck or in our berth below, according to the state of the weather, with a French grammar, and mastered most of the genders and idioms of that language. With the approach of noon further culinary operations again demanded attention; water had to be drawn from alongside for cleaning and cooking; then the little variety of our food induced all sorts of contrivances to make some change the appetite recoils from the constant salt provision: after repeated trials we found the most palatable dish to be rashers of bacon buried in slices of potatoes and baked: the earthy taste and juices of the potatoes corrected the pungency of the salted meat.

On the fiftieth day from the date of our departure we were in soundings on St. George's Bank: the greased lead brought up grey sand and shells, and we all crowded round eager to catch a glimpse of this small portion of the land to which we were bound. At this time many of the coasting schooners peculiar to the ports of America were seen steering in one direction towards the west: a long faint cloud, low down in the same quarter, was pointed out to us as the loom of the land. Then, as the sun disappeared, a distant twinkle caught our eyes: this was the Fire Island light, and gladly did we hail the bright evidence of our proximity to the coast. Still later, other lights, which from their great height we at first mistook for stars, were seen. These were the beacons on the highlands of Neversink, on the coast of the state of New Jersey. We might now be said to be within reach of New York, a fact acknowledged with the greatest pleasure by all on board.

This had been a bright and oppressively hot day; towards midnight the wind died away, leaving the atmosphere even more close and sultry; when suddenly in the north-west black clouds arose and spread over the whole heavens with inconceivable rapidity · the lightning began to blaze and the thunder to roar in a manner appalling to unaccustomed ears; down came the rain as though it would beat in our very deck; the flashes were incessant, while the thunder that accompanied them seemed to roll up from every quarter of the compass, and meet at the zenith in most fearful and stunning reverberations. This was something like what I had read of tropical storms; the black clouds, however, blew over to seawards, leaving the face of the sky bright and serene, and the air cool and refreshing.

The next morning we were all on deck early to catch the first glad sight of land; there it lay, a flat and low sandy beach, with pine forests in the background, on both sides of us, while directly ahead we saw the point and lighthouse of Sandy Hook. How we feasted our eyes on the "dull tame shore!" Those alone who have looked upon nothing but sky and water for many weeks, can appreciate the feeling with which land is regarded: the weary take new courage, and the sickly appear endowed with new life; and although the view possessed no beauties, yet there was land—the land of promise to all of us.

A fine breeze bore us rapidly up the channel: off Sandy Hook we were boarded by a pilot. As he stepped on deck we pressed forward to look at the first Yankee. His appearance was not that of a naval personage: in dress and demeanour he was a gentleman; and we augured favourably of a country whose pilots, judging from the specimen before us, showed themselves to greater advantage than any we had previously met with. Ours drew a newspaper from his pocket, which he handed to the captain: we learned by this that news had been received from England so late as the 10th May, while we, who had sailed three weeks earlier, were but just entering the port. The pilot then, casting his eyes aloft, gave his orders with so much rapidity and decision, that our old ship seemed to feel she had got into new hands, and walked along in a style she had never before displayed. Here a halyard would bear a pull; there a brace was tautened, or the sails sheeted home; nothing was left slovenly, what was to be done was done well and quickly, and the sailors ran about with an alacrity that told the value of energetic command. The news-boat next came alongside. Her captain inquired as to the length of our voyage, freight, number of passengers, with other customary questions, the statement of which would appear in the shipping intelligence of the New York papers the next morning.

We doubled Sandy Hook, and found ourselves in the outer or lower bay: at the upper extremity the shores of Staten and Long Islands approach each other, and form what is named the Narrows, on passing which an unexpected and beautiful sight burst upon us. On the left was Staten Island, with its bold and lofty heights covered with wood to their very summits, its cool and shady valleys rejoicing in the richest vegetation, through which the eye sought in vain to penetrate, here approaching so near to the water that the pendent branches trailed in the gently swelling waves. On a bare and high bluff which commanded an extensive view to seaward, were the lighthouse and signal-posts for telegraphing the arrival of vessels to the city. Farther, on an eminence facing the sea, we saw the Seamen's Hospital, for the support of which all passengers entering the port are taxed to the amount of one dollar. At the foot of this eminence stands the village, its painted houses scattered in all directions, with no apparent regard to symmetry or order; still the contrast between the red, white, or yellow buildings, and the brilliant foliage in the background, possessed a novel charm which delighted us; while the hourly arrival and departure of gaily painted steam-boats to

and from the city, whose steeples were visible in the distance; the swift motion and elegant forms of the numerous pleasure-boats skimming over the surface of the water; the fleet of vessels at anchor on the quarantine ground; the arrival and departure of others; with the bright sun, the deep blue sky, and glorious breeze; all combined to render the scene as animated and interesting as it was welcome.

"Let go the anchor," cried the pilot from the quarterdeck: the ponderous mass sunk to the bottom, and the ship swung slowly round to the tide. We knocked open the ports which had been caulked to exclude the water, and allowed the purifying breeze to sweep through our berths. All were now on the *qui vive* for the shore, when a boat was seen approaching, steered by an elderly gentleman wearing a broad-brimmed straw-hat turned up behind: he was the health officer of the port; and having ascertained that no contagious disease existed among us, he gave permission for four of our number to land. These were charged with commissions to bring off bread, milk, and butter: how we longed for fresh and moist food, and how we enjoyed it when it did arrive, cannot well be told.

The captain went up to the city to report his arrival to the consignees, and on his return announced that a sloop would be alongside by daybreak the next morning to convey us all with our baggage to the city. We set to work packing everything in readiness overnight; and at the appointed hour transferred our persons and our effects to the vessel hired for us, and took leave of the Argus and those on board of her with three hearty cheers. We were first carried to a wooden wharf not far from the shore, with which it was quite unconnected: here our names were called over, our boxes examined, and our bedding opened and exposed to the air; the health officer superintended the latter process, while the officers of the customs, with the greatest civility and quietness, inspected the boxes which we had standing open ready for their supervision. No undue display of authority was to be detected; the performance of their duty in a firm yet considerate manner seemed to be all that they desired. These operations occupied several hours, during which, from our isolated situation, we suffered greatly from hunger and thirst. After they were completed we once more placed our baggage on the deck of the sloop, and, casting off the moorings, were soon under weigh for the city. On starting, we again gave three hearty cheers; but a company of German emigrants, who had gone through an inspection similar to our own at the opposite end of the same wharf, burst unanimously into a beautiful chorus, all their voices blending in rich and sonorous harmony, while at the close a quartette alone finished the melody. The effect was almost magical, wafted over the waters of the beautiful bay; and on contrasting it with our own uproarious shouts, I could not help thinking that the Germans had chosen the happiest medium for the expression of their feelings. The wind and tide were both in our favour. In half an hour we had passed Governor's Island, Castle Garden, the Battery, and, entering the East River, found ourselves all at once deafened by loud invitations to an endless variety of boarding-houses before we touched the land; touters of all sizes and all colours stood ready to thrust their cards into our hands with a jabbering that quite repelled us. Meantime the vessel was securely moored to the wharf; we hastened on shore; hasty farewells were uttered, and we, who for fifty-two days had lived in such intimate neighbourhood, would, ere the close of the day, be widely scattered, each one anxious for his own interest. And thus we stood in the New World.

This was the moment of trial: the true men now showed themselves, and made their arrangements with a promptitude and energy that told how well they understood and had considered their plans; while the timid and the vacillating, they who, among companions, could talk the loudest and most boastfully, now that it came to acting for themselves, lost all heart, and betaking themselves to the nearest liquor store, drowned their cowardice in gin. There was, however, something intimidating in the feelings excited on entering a strange city in a far away land: there was the consciousness that nearly four thousand miles of ocean separated us from our home; when *that* disappeared we had unconsciously conceived an attachment for the ship which had been our shelter for so many days, and now that was left; those with whom we had lived in friendly intercourse on the ocean, were rapidly vanishing from around us, as each one departed his own way. Before us were all the noise, bustle, and confusion ever to be found in streets near the water of seaport towns; carts in endless succession were pouring from the side streets along the quay, laden with merchandise for the tow boats about to start for the interior; others, just arrived, were discharging their cargoes, wheels were jammed against wheels; horses

fell; loads were thrown off, and men execrated. Steam ferry-boats were continually crossing and recrossing the river to Brooklyn, glittering in white paint, on the opposite shore of Long Island. The whole visible length of the river was crowded with shipping, from the country sloops with their gay streamers, to the splendid packet ships. At the back of the quay, which extended as far as the eye could reach, stood a row of tall houses, painted in various shades of red, green, yellow, and white: the external shutters to the windows of every story, while novel in appearance, betokened a scorching sun; the awnings, stretched from the front of the shops to posts fixed at the outer edge of the side walks, in an almost uninterrupted line, furnished still stronger evidence on this point. The names, too, like all besides, were strange and new; such a mixture of Dutch, French, and German, with the legitimate American. The signs were no less striking to a stranger: *Storage*, in large letters, was written on every third or fourth house: *Grocery* indicated a grocer's shop: *Domestics* did not signify "helps," but "dry goods" or printed cottons manufactured in the country: *Bakery* showed where one of life's great essentials could be bought: while "liquor stores" were not to be reckoned for number. Traces of the early Dutch possessors were conspicuous in some of the buildings, and in the names written on them; *Voorhees* and *Schuyler*, *Dewitt* and *Van Vrauken*, recalled the days of the sturdy old Knickerbockers.

With very few exceptions, the whole of our steerage passengers transferred themselves to a tow-boat preparing to start for Albany, from whence, by means of the Erie canal, the majority of them would find their way to their respective destinations. Just at this moment a man, dressed in black, of gentlemanly appearance, carrying a large blue bag, went amongst them; he was the agent of a Bible Society, and presented a neatly bound copy of the Scriptures, with a few words of advice, to every emigrant whom he found destitute of the volume.

"Carman, want a carman, boss?" "First rate board, three dollars a week," had been the ceaseless cries around us from the moment we stepped on shore. I had been to look at one or two boarding-houses which did not please me, when the last carman who came up declared that he knew a "first-rate house about two blocks off," which I went to see, and was satisfied with its appearance, and the rate of advertised charges. A carpenter with whom I had become acquainted on board the Argus, had agreed to join company with me for a short time, thinking we might, possibly, be of service to each other; we therefore engaged the carman to remove our luggage, and in a short time were quietly seated over a refreshing cup of tea, of which we stood much in need after the harassing occupations and events of the day. The house, however, did not come up to its promise of "first-rate," for there were no walls to the bedrooms, no convenience for washing, and "any quantity" of bugs in the bedsteads: we were not sorry to remove the next day to another house in a quiet street in the upper part of the city. It was understood that no charge should be made for the storage of our chests, &c., during the few days of our stay; but when we were leaving, and the load was on the car, the landlord insisted that we should pay a dollar and a half for the accommodation, before he would allow the driver to leave his door. We were obliged, through our inexperience, to submit to the imposition, which we afterwards learned was altogether illegal.

The house to which we removed was full of newly arrived emigrants, of whom there were constant arrivals and departures; there was matter of astonishment, and in many cases of pity, in listening to their remarks on the new country of which they had become denizens; how profoundly ignorant most of them were in all that concerned the vitality of their position and prospects: some were from Sheffield—with the Yorkshire accent fresh upon their tongues, sounding less harsh and not unwelcome, so far remote from its native soil—these were loud in their denunciations of the artful schemes employed by the emigration agents to induce them to leave home. Poor fellows, they expected to earn twenty dollars a week in New York, and to find crowds of "bosses" waiting on the quay to hire them immediately on their landing. The disappointment to those with large families was cruel in the extreme; the city was already overdone with manufacturers of hardware, wages were not higher than in Sheffield, and to complete their misfortunes, they were exposed to all the rapacity of boarding-house-keepers. Those who had the means returned to England within a week of their arrival; the others dispersed themselves over the city and contrived to pick up a living as "saw-filers." Fortunately it was not difficult to find situations for such of their children as were of an age to be useful; and relieved of this charge their situation was not so desperate as it appeared in the first burst of disappointment.

The temporary lodging being now secured, no time was to be lost in seeking for

work and a permanent residence. For the latter we had arrived a month too late, as very few unoccupied houses or apartments are to be found after the 1st of May. The slim condition of my purse, however, rendered the obtaining of work an object of paramount importance; and, as my wife and family were as comfortable as could be expected under the circumstances, I sallied forth to ask

"A brother of the earth to give me leave to toil."

I had always read in books and letters on America, that work was ever abundant, and to be obtained without difficulty; but all my experience proves the contrary, at least as regards New York. At the first place I entered, the proprietor informed me that trade was "pretty well used up," and "no hands were wanted." Another gave as a reason for not requiring any addition to his number of workmen that "General Jackson had tinkered the constitution too successfully for business to be what it ought to be for a pretty considerable time." At a third place, a lad waiting in the store, in reply to my query, hailed a companion working at the back of the house, "Hiram, call the boss:"* the boss came, and on repeating my inquiry, he observed, "My stock of furniture is going off, that's a fact; but I can't take hands on for want of the pewter."

It would be tedious to detail all the reasons given by the "bosses" on whom I called during my walks, which were continued unsuccessfully for a week. In only a single instance did I hear any thing like an expression of jealousy of strangers; one manufacturer remarked in an angry tone, that "the city was overcrowded with foreigners who took away work that by right belonged to the citizens." "Go west," was the general observation, "go west; the city's too full; any quantity of work out west." My means, however, did not admit of my undertaking another long journey; and on the eighth day I was fortunate enough to find employment from a master tradesman who had emigrated from England twenty years previously; he now lived in his own house, had a capital business, and was worth many thousand dollars. On telling him that I had been advised to go to the country, he said, "Don't do any such thing; if you can't get a living in New York, you can't in any part of the Union; I have tried both, and know it."

This was cheering. I went to work the next morning; and in the course of the same week had the good luck to meet with two rooms and a pantry to let, in a small farmhouse, which I hired for sixty-five dollar yearly rent. During my first day's work I found my shopmates were from many different countries; two were Americans, one Irish, one English, two Germans, and one Frenchman. On my first entrance, the foreman, an American, called out to the representative of the emerald isle, "Look here, Paddy; here's another Johnny Bull come over to be civilized." John Bull, however, can afford to be laughed at. After we became acquainted we went on very pleasantly together: the superior skill of the Germans and Frenchman was of the highest service to me, who had much to learn, never having worked but in a provincial town in England; and as the Frenchman could not speak a word of English, and worked at the next bench to mine, my French studies were materially benefited by the conversations I had with him, and the more so as he was a remarkably intelligent workman.

We were not sorry to leave the boarding-house where the charges had been higher than we could well afford, and to take possession of our new house, in which, although there was nothing but the bare walls and our chests and boxes, yet there was domestic privacy, that great essential to comfort and contentment; and the more prized as we had been strangers to it from the time we set foot on shipboard in the previous month of April. It was on the 5th of July that we removed; and as we walked through St. John's Park we saw great numbers of the black population, with gay coloured scarfs and banners, preparing to celebrate the anniversary of their manumission, by perambulating the city on the day after the great national holiday.

It was evening by the time our things were all removed. Our beds had been lost overboard at the anchorage; I therefore went out and bought several bundles of straw which we spread upon the floor, and laying blankets on the top we enjoyed sleep as sound and refreshing as it would have been in the best appointed chamber. The next day we drew our biggest chest to the middle of the room for a table, while the smaller trunks and boxes served as seats; and thus we went on pleased with our contrivances until the end of the first week, when out of my surplus earnings we bought a bedstead and a few chairs, and with these we determined to be content until a small store of dollars should have been saved. We were well off as regards fuel, for my boss was pulling down an old workshop, and gave me

The master

two loads of the waste wood; among this I found sufficient to make a small bench, which I hoped to turn to good account, and made place for it in one corner of our room; the remainder I sawed into lengths for burning on the open hearth common to the inferior class of houses throughout the States, and such as is seen in farm-houses in England. When a small fire is needed, or for the burning of charcoal, it is customary to use a "furnace" made of fire-clay, in shape like a large flowerpot with a double bottom, the upper one being pierced full of holes for the admission of air. These, in the hot weather, are frequently used in the open air, and as they concentrate the heat, cooking may be very conveniently performed upon them.

The cheapness of provisions at that time was in our favour; the profusion of meat, fruit, and vegetables was such, that two dollars and a half, or ten shillings sterling, sufficed for our weekly expenses. In the spare hours of the morning and evening, as often as the great heats would permit, I set myself to make a table; and I shall not soon forget the pleasure we felt when on its completion we placed it in the centre of the room. When our life on shipboard is taken into account, we had been so long without a table, that for some time we could not cease to congratulate ourselves on the great convenience it afforded us. A shelf for books was fitted into a recess at one side of the fireplace, and then we considered our domestic arrangements complete.

In embarking for America, it was with the resolution to give the country a fair trial; that if we fell short of the anticipated benefit it should be from no inattention on my part. We contented ourselves for many months with the simple provision above described; and during the first two years, with the exception of a week's illness, I was not absent from work for more than a single day. It may be said that if a man would resolutely pursue such a course in England, he would hardly find it necessary to emigrate; but shame stands in the way; many do not like to sink in the eyes of their neighbours and friends. To "get along" in England as thousands do in America would be considered a disgrace, although such a course in the moral discipline induced might be fraught with the happiest effects.

It would not, perhaps, be out of place to say a few words on the fallacious notions and expectations generally entertained by actual or intending emigrants. They cross the Atlantic with very exaggerated ideas of their own importance, and the advantages they expect to derive from the change of situation: but with regard to the United States, they will find a host of unforeseen difficulties awaiting them. They expect to go through life with less labour or less difficulty than they have previously endured, but they must work harder than ever if they wish to gain a comfortable living. They are in a country where, although many try to live without working, and look down with contempt on the jacket and apron, there is no sympathy with idleness. They expect to meet a people of imperfect skill and little improvement, who will give them any price for their knowledge; but on the contrary they find the new people have improved almost every object involving mechanical skill, from a stay-lace to a steam-boat; most articles of domestic use, tables, chairs, brooms, and brushes, are lighter and more tasteful than similar articles in the "old country;" and instead of being the leaders, such emigrants are content to drop into the rear, happy if they can maintain their footing. Then there are the vicissitudes of the climate, which in most seasons are intolerably severe and trying to the constitution. The new emigrant, again, has heard of the successes of some of his acquaintance who went out years ago, and he looks for equal success in his own case, losing sight of the multitudes who left their homes with the same views and have been miserably disappointed. He finds difficulties, discouragements, and expenses which were altogether unanticipated; he finds it difficult to keep pace with the stirring rivalry around him; and unless he be a man of unflinching courage and perseverance, his fate is the fate of thousands; he abandons the struggle, falls into habits which the great heats and the cheapness of exhilarating drinks render but too prevalent; and his career ends hopelessly, while he has never ceased to regret his departure from *home.*

These remarks, however, apply principally to those who cannot exist away from the noise and excitement of a city; while they who can rely on the strength of their principles and their arms, may betake themselves to the smaller towns and villages of the interior, where the field of labour is wide and the temptation to idleness small. There, with common industry, a man may soon call himself the owner of a piece of land, on which he builds a house, and then, secure of a home, works on in all the gladness of honourable independence, in the anticipation of welcome repose in age. I know but of one objection to this: wages in coun-

try places are more often paid in kind than in money. I knew a man who for three weeks' work, in the neighbourhood of Buffalo, was paid with a load of hay.

We soon felt the difference between an English and American summer. The weather, when we landed, and for a short time afterwards, was about as warm as the same season on the eastern side of the Atlantic; but at the beginning of July the heat became intense; the thermometer in the sun stood at 120° and at 96° in the shade. It is scarcely possible to imagine the state of feeling produced by such an extreme. While sitting perfectly still in the thinnest clothing, the perspiration streams from every pore, trickles from every hair of the head, and falls in a shower to the floor. The garments become saturated and stick to the skin, which, irritated as it already is by the "prickly heat," a disease common to warm climates, suffers an intolerable degree of discomfort. The desire to drink is irresistible, and copious draughts of water are taken to compensate for the excessive waste; breathing, in fact, becomes almost too great an effort. The physical inconveniences here described are those of a state of repose; what then must be the weariness and exhaustion attendant on eleven or twelve hours' labour in a confined workshop? I have felt at times so worn out as scarcely to be able to crawl home in the evening, where, seating myself in a cool place, though this was rather difficult to find with the thermometer at 90° after sunset, I seldom stirred until the lapse of some hours of darkness, or the blowing of the evening breeze gave reason to hope that sleep might be sought with a chance of success. Repose, however, attends but seldom on the pillow; the torrid atmosphere generates such swarms of bugs that with the greatest care it is impossible to completely extirpate them. These alone are sufficient to worry a weary man into madness, to say nothing of the incessant noise, like that produced by knife-grinders, caused by the locusts, and the contentious chirrup of the kaly-dids which abound in the trees that grow along each side of the street as high as the first-floor windows; and later in the season the swarms of musquitoes with their exasperating sting and Lilliputian trumpets:—no wonder the inhabitants look so thin and haggard when their repose is thus destroyed by the very cause which renders it the more necessary.

On the public pumps in the streets printed placards were pasted with the words "DEATH TO DRINK COLD WATER;" but in spite of the warning several deaths occurred from inconsiderate drinking, principally among Irish labourers. Some of the masons who were at work on the great Astor Hotel dropped down dead from the effects of the heat. In consequence of these deaths the builders generally came to the resolution to suspend out-of-doors work every day from the hours of twelve to four, until the weather moderated. The brute creation did not escape; horses fell dead in their harness. The whole effect of these events was very startling to a stranger. The fiercest intensity of the heat, however, seldom lasts for more than three days at a time; it is then succeeded by an appalling thunderstorm, after which the temperature is a shade more bearable for a few days. Millions of flies infest the air, swarm in every room, and settle on every article of food, so as to be truly disgusting. I have seen them congregated in such numbers on the tea-table, that the butter and sugar looked like nothing else than moving masses of blackness, and the noise of their buzzing when a candle is lighted in the evening is altogether insupportable.

I underwent a severe attack of bilious fever before being thoroughly acclimated; it laid me by for a week, and eventually yielded to copious bleeding, but left me very weak for some time afterwards. The worst was, however, to come: our little daughter, who had lived through all the trials of the voyage, fell a victim to the disease so fatal to infant life throughout the United States, known as the "summer complaint," or *cholera infantum*. For many days our hopes struggled with our fears; we prayed that she might recover; but at last, when reduced to the extremity of attenuation, her gentle heart ceased to beat. In the hot season there is but a short interval between the death and the burial: on the evening of our day of bereavement I saw our darling laid in the earth; and owing to the negligence of the grave-digger, was obliged to stand by while he dug the grave: on turning to leave the ground he ran after me, shouting that it was customary to pay cash, and he would write a receipt.

Death's first inroad among a little family becomes a melancholy halting-place in its annals. To our eyes Time had left a footstep visible on his trackless path. A knell of sorrow sounded in our ears, whose echo yet lingers in our hearts.

The certainty of employment left me at liberty to notice in my daily walks some of the peculiarities of the city and its inha-

bitants. One feature that particularly strikes a stranger is the bright and unsmoked appearance of the streets and houses. The predilections of the early Dutch colonists in favour of paint, which they introduced, with many other characteristics of their native Holland, into their new country, have come down to their descendants, or rather successors. A house painted all over with a clear brilliant white first attracts the eye; the next will be a flaring red, with the joints of the bricks "picked out" in white; its neighbour will most likely be yellow, succeeded by green, followed in turn by a front covered with red and white chequers after the fashion of a draught-board. All this, though not in the best taste, yet being renewed annually, serves to give the city, above the surface of the streets, a clean and cheerful appearance. The leading thoroughfares look like long green avenues during the fine season, bordered by the trees planted at the verge of the footways, whose shade is really grateful in the hot days, of which I have attempted a description in the preceding passages. The paving is, however, execrable; the roughness and inequality of the surface impede alike the progress of horses, vehicles, and human beings. At the yearly municipal elections "Inspectors of Streets" are duly appointed and paid, but their utility is very questionable, since the streets are seen covered with all sorts of rubbish, ashes, bones, refuse vegetables, among which pigs prowl in undisturbed felicity. The 1st of May in every year is the time chosen for removals; then household furniture of all descriptions, in every species of conveyance, may be seen in busy motion in all the streets, as though the owners were flying from a besieging army. For some days before and after this event the public ways, always dirty and encumbered, receive fresh contributions: old shoes, pots, pans, kettles, shattered relics of the pantry and scullery, are pitched into the streets as the readiest mode of getting rid of them. The straw beds universally used are now emptied of their worn contents, and the heaps of old straw thus scattered in all directions furnish rare sport to the young republicans, who set fire to them after nightfall, throwing in whatever combustibles may lie around; and so ends "flitting day" with a general blaze.

In consequence of the want of sewers the drainage is all on the surface, which tends very much to increase the unsavouriness of the streets, swept but once a week during the summer, while in the winter the dirt is left undisturbed, mingled with the snow, for months together. The fatal effects of this negligence are often felt in the great heats, in the breaking out of epidemic diseases. The fearful visitation of the cholera in 1832 will long be remembered by the New Yorkers. The public health is not, however, entirely lost sight of, for during the hottest season medical advice and medicine are gratuitously given to all poor or sickly applicants in the different wards of the city; close alleys and the gutters of narrow streets are limewashed; cesspools are inspected, and when necessary purified by the throwing in of several bushels of lime, as a means of preventing the generation of contagious miasm.

Another peculiarity observable by a stranger is the youthfulness of the population. Young men from twenty to twenty-five are there seen in positions which in older countries are filled by men of twice that age. The appearance of the busy throngs that pass up and down the streets would lead one to deduct a third from the chance of life as compared with Britain. There is much less of variety in physical development than we are accustomed to see in Europe. The comely and portly personages met with in all parts of England are very rarely seen there; occasionally an old person of one or the other sex is encountered, but withered and sapless, as though the torrid heats and arctic frosts had drawn out all their vital juices. The season of infancy and boyhood, like the spring of the natural year, is brief and ungenial; soon swallowed up in the assumption of a manly bearing—of the privileges of age without its experience. The want of "veneration" which pervades all the social and political relations of the country is nowhere so manifest as in the intercourse between parents and children. "Honour thy father and thy mother" is a precept little regarded where the domestic ties are slight, where the fireside virtues are but little esteemed. The holy and elevating influence of age upon youth is completely lost in the engrossing claims of business on the one hand, and on the other, in the precocious desire for independence and enjoyment.

A short residence in New York is sufficient to prove that the convenience of pedestrians is not an object of paramount importance, as in London. The side walks of many of the leading thoroughfares are encroached upon in the most reckless manner. In front of nearly every "grocery" stands a huge ugly bin, from which the supply of charcoal is retailed, supported on either side by old hogsheads, barrels, and

sugar-boxes, forming a mass as unsightly as it is inconvenient and dangerous. In front of timber or "lumber yards," the occupiers raise high piles of wood on the foot and roadway, without any regard to the facilities of traffic.

Wood is the staple fuel of the inhabitants: carts loaded with it may always be seen passing from the country boats moored alongside the wharfs, to all parts of the city, where the load is "dumped" opposite the door of the purchaser. This wood being in lengths of four feet, must then be sawed into shorter lengths, convenient for the hearth or stove: an operation performed in the street by some of the many "wood sawyers," most of them negroes, who are continually on the look-out for a job; and when the quantity they have to cut is large, an accumulating heap of little blocks remains on the ground during the whole of their tedious labour.

The markets of New York teem with a rich supply of vegetables and fruits in the fine season: the duty of going to market is not confined exclusively to females; most of it is done by the men. I have often started for the market as early as five o'clock in the morning, in order to be ready for work at six, as well as to take advantage of the cool hours for the buying of meat, which in the hot months must be cooked soon after it is killed, to prevent putrefaction. What a tempting sight to an Englishman is the display of pine-apples, melons, peaches, and profusion of tropical fruits! I have frequently bought a large and juicy melon for three cents, and a peck of the most delicious peaches for ten cents, whose flavour, ripened by the glowing sun of an American sky, far exceeds all that I have ever tasted in this country. He only who has panted under that sultry sky can have any adequate conception of the luxury and enjoyment of cutting open a rich cool melon, and suffering its pulpy substance to dissolve in the mouth. It is then we gratefully feel how bountifully Nature compensates for all her apparent annoyances and inconveniences.

To one who has been accustomed to see meat sold, as in England, by ounces—to weigh the loaf against the appetite—the abundance and cheapness of an American market are very gratifying. Instead of buying a chop, wherewith to flavour a large mass of potatoes, he will carry home a quarter of a sheep or a lamb, or a solid rib of beef, with as many vegetables as he can well stagger under, pleased with the anticipation that the tender frames of his little growing family will receive due development under the generous nourishment. In such a case there is no stint; no uneasy thoughts about the coming day's supply; no impending dread of hungry looks or hungry stomachs among those who claim his best affections. This, I have often thought, is the chief cause of the firmer tone and manner which soon becomes apparent in the person of newly-arrived emigrants: shadowed forth in glowing colours in the letters which they write to their friends at home. Unfortunately it too often ends here:—the physical is fostered, but the moral is neglected.

At the approach of winter, the "tow-boats" that bring down country produce are laden to a tenfold degree; apples, potatoes, poultry, pigs killed and scalded in readiness for cutting up, absolutely crowd the decks, piled many feet in height. Customers are not wanting, as the prices are lower than in the markets, and it is a common practice among nearly all classes to lay in a stock of such provisions as will keep at the commencement of the cold season. At such times I have bought apples at fifty cents a barrel (three bushels), potatoes eighteen cents the bushel; while the piles of fat hogs are sold at from four to five cents a pound; and a whole sheep for a dollar.

These prices are, however, subject to great fluctuations: the severe winters cause a general rise in all kinds of vegetable produce: at such times twelve or eighteen cents will be charged for a cabbage; from the month of January to May, the scarcity of green food is universal. The price of bread also is not less uncertain: I have often paid six cents for a loaf, which a few weeks earlier in the season would not have cost more than half that sum. For more than half of the five years that we lived in New York, the prices of provisions were, with very slender exceptions, as high as those in the large towns of this country.

The Northern and Eastern states have a West Indian summer and a Russian winter: in the latter season the north-westerly winds sweep every thing like vegetation from the face of the earth. Our first experience of the cold was as trying as that of the heat both were more severe than had been known for some years. So searching are the bitter blasts, that, seated by a well-heated stove, it was impossible to refrain from shivering. None but the most violent exercise will retain in the body any comfortable degree of warmth. The broad rolling Hudson is frozen over, and for the next six months all river navigation is completely stopped. The atmosphere is, however, dry; the sky brilliantly blue; and the exhilaration produced by bright sunshine enables one to withstand

ıe polar hurricanes. The commencement f the year is generally attended by heavy ılls of snow; then the smooth-gliding eighs make their appearance, drawn by orses to whose harness bells are attached, ıat jingle merrily as they trot over the ard frozen surface of the roads. Still, with l these compensating circumstances, the inters are long and tedious; their reign ıay be estimated on the average at seven ıonths. There is little or none of the deghtful and promising season of spring; I ave seen a fall of six inches of snow on the 7th of April, accompanied by a biting nor'-ester, with not a glimpse of vegetation isible. On the 15th of May following, the ıestnut-trees in the streets were in full af; men and horses panting with the heat; ogs hanging their tongues out of their ıouths. With one stride winter passes into ımmer.

On landing in New York I made up my ıind to lose none of the advantages it ffered by want of diligence on my part. uring the first two years I took but one oliday, and that was passed in company ith a French shopmate, in a glorious stroll ı the wave-beaten sands, and among the reezy woods of Staten Island. In summer e began work at six; at eight took half an our for breakfast, and then worked till velve, when came an hour for dinner; ter which we kept on till six, seven, or ght, as we pleased, deferring our third eal until the close of our daily labour. In ıe winter we took breakfast before dayght, so as to arrive at the workshop by the me that we could see to work, thereby ıining time, and saving ourselves a walk ı unpleasant weather. On leaving at eight the evening, I carried with me a portion my tools, and set myself to make up such ticles of furniture as we most needed; ıd frequently have I found myself still ısy, impatient for the completion of the oject that would afford us at once conveniıce and ornament, at the striking of the wee short hour ayont the twal." At other mes, after laying down my load of tools, I ould find it difficult to resist the feeling of eariness induced by eleven hours of preous labour, and sinking instinctively into chair, take up a book, and soon forget my echanical duties. It will show how far I as possessed by the utilitarian feeling that, ı such occasions, I thought on going to d that I had lost an evening. I did not en know that this was one of the methods ade use of by nature for restoring her ılance, compensating for the tension of uscular exertion.

It took another form in the workshop: there it frequently happened about the middle of the afternoon of some sultry summer's day, or of a stormy day in winter, after several weeks of real hard work unrelieved by any change, that a simultaneous cessation from work took place, no one could tell why, though no surprise was manifested that, in the one case, we placed ourselves near an open window, or in the other that we drew round the stove. Then, as it were by tacit agreement, every hand held out its contribution of "loose change;" the apprentice was sent on his errand, and speedily returned laden with wine, brandy, biscuits, and cheese. The appropriation of these refreshments was sure to call forth songs from those who felt musical; after which came a proposition for a further supply, which provoked a more noisy vocalization, while the conversation which had been animated became excited. With a third instalment we concluded the day, and went home half in wonder at our folly, half vexed at our loss of time, feelings which the dizziness of our heads and the uneasiness of our limbs rendered more acute the next day. I always remarked on these occasions that the brandy was drunk by the English, Americans, or Irish, while the French and Germans invariably chose wine, remarking that the spirit was too strong. Their songs, too, possessed more sentiment and character, and were much more musical, than those roared by the natives or "Britishers." I remember once quizzing one of our Germans on some peculiarities of his country, to which he replied, "Ah, dat is very well; but you can't make kings and kveens in your country; you must come to my country for dem."

It is matter of notoriety and of observation that, of all the emigrants who flock into the United States, the English are generally the least successful. The Irish, Scotch, Germans, save money; and of those who crowd the shipping offices for the remitting of money to their friends in the "old country," the greater proportion will be found among these three nations. Many of them who on their first arrival worked on the wharfs or in the streets, rise gradually upwards until they have accumulated sufficient capital to enable them to go west, or to open a "store," which then becomes the temporary headquarters of all their acquaintances who may thereafter seek their fortune on the western side of the Atlantic. The English, on the contrary, probably from the absurd notions they entertain of their own importance, involve themselves in perpetual disputes with

the natives as to the respective superiority of the old or new country. They do not fall easily into the busy movements around them; their own opinions *must* be the best; they do not work from necessity, but as a compliment to the country; they cannot abide that their standard of living should be in any degree below that of the Americans, hence their lack of economy; and so they go on grumbling until they are pushed aside by more active competitors.

In the summer of 1836, when the inflated state of commerce and speculation had eached its height, when prices and rents were increasing in a like proportion, a strike took place among the cabinet-makers. They were dissatisfied with the wages then paid for their labour; and having compiled a new price-book as the basis of their claims, they held meetings; appointed committees; and on a given day, with very few exceptions, ceased working in all the shops of the city. The Americans of our workshop were among the noisiest of the strike, and naturally expected that I should join them; but to this, for several reasons, I was disinclined. First, I considered that I was receiving quite as high wages as my manual skill deserved; next, I felt disposed to attach more importance to the claims of my family than to the ill-considered demands of a body of men, of which the greater part were but the stepping-stones for a few selfish individuals; and last, my "turning out" would have been but an ill return for the kindness of my employer, who had given me work in the anxious time immediately following our arrival, and befriended me in various ways afterwards. Two or three deputations were sent to argue with me on the subject; in vain I expressed my belief that the unsatisfactory rate of wages was rather to be attributed to the unprecedented influx of workmen from abroad, than to any other circumstance; they silenced, without convincing me; and finding me firm, they resorted to threats, and promised to waylay and "hammer" me on my way home from work, and concluded their arguments with a high-flown and frothy exposition of the rights of man—of the bounden duty of the minority to yield to whatever the majority may enact. Threats succeeded no better than arguments; I kept on working during the whole of the strike, and in the six weeks that it lasted earned forty-eight dollars; while the others, although in a few instances they obtained a rise, were, at the end of a month after, working at the old wages, having lost nearly half of the best season, and in many cases were supplanted by other artisans which the continued tide of emigration poured into the city. A year or two afterwards I accidentally met one of the members of the deputations, who, recognising me, stopped for a few minutes to speak of his recollections of the event, and added, with a laugh, "You were the toughest customer we had; but I guess it would have been better for us had we all done as you did."

Thousands in America will long remember the wild speculative excitement of 1836 Every one, the wise, the proud, and the learned, was making haste to be rich; the desire spread like a contagion. What wonder, then, that I should have been led astray by the general delusion? A relative who arrived from England held out to me brigh prospects of advantages to be realized by the employment of a little capital, combine with a removal to some inland town. sold off nearly the whole of our moveables whose fabrication had occupied the evening of the two previous winters; and havin made a preliminary journey with my frien returned alone at the end of three week with a large accession of experience, but most woful lack of dollars. In other word our scheme had completely failed, and I ha no resource but in my industry and chest tools to meet the impending difficultie Remaining in New York was now out of th question; dread of the ridicule which m thoughtlessness or folly would excite was t great to be easily withstood. I therefo resolved on removing to Poughkeepsie, town on the banks of the Hudson, abo eighty miles above the city, where a lar fire having just before burnt down two c binet-making establishments, it was reaso able to hope that work would be readi obtained.

Our whole capital, as with our bagga we took places on a bright smoking morni in June on board of one of the Alba steamers, was five dollars. The Champla was one of the finest boats on the river. H deck was crowded with passengers, all app rently animated by the exhilarating morni breeze. The scenery on either shore w such as to claim admiration; but a heavin was at my heart which nothing could remo It seemed that my hand would not quit t pocket, where the dollars were count again and again; while as I looked on c two little boys, who, pleased with the nove of their situation, were running merr about the deck, I found myself involuntar calculating how long they would live on t dollars, all that would be left after the p ment of our fare. I sat upon my chest, I

n the bitterness of self-reproach, uninterested by the scene around me. The conversation of the other passengers, their occasional jests and bursts of laughter, annoyed me; I was anxious for the future, and ashamed of the past. My uneasiness was heightened, on going to the captain's office to pay our fare of three dollars, on finding that he intended to make the unusual charge of a dollar and a half for our baggage. I ventured to remonstrate; but was met by the reply, that if "I didn't like it I might go by another boat." I had now but half a dollar left; all my calculations were disappointed; while in the chance of not finding work at the end of our journey my courage had well nigh failed me.

Many times on that, to us, melancholy morning, had I heard the cry "Go ahead" from the men at the gangway to the engineer, after stopping to land passengers. At this moment the energetic phrase was again repeated, and it struck my attention so forcibly, that I could not help applying it to myself. It gave a new direction to my thoughts, leading them from vain regrets to the resources that lay before me: the flame of hope began, though feebly, to revive; and from this time my uneasiness sensibly abated.

The swift vessel entered the highlands, whose beauties have been well preserved in the writings of the author of 'Rip van Winkle;'—the scene of Arnold's treachery and André's suffering. On a high rock we saw the fort of West Point, and near it the Military Academy. Many of the cadets were lying on the crags, under the shade of the trees, watching the vessels as they passed up and down this magnificent portion of the river. And soon after the cry of "Poughkeepsie baggage" warned us to make preparations for landing. Our chests and boxes were hauled to the gangway; the usual unceremonious halt was made, so short that the vessel was some feet from the wharf as I leaped on shore with our last parcel. She dashed on, and left us standing there with all our hopes and fears crowding fast upon us.

We were immediately surrounded by a number of Irish labourers, all clamorous for the job of carrying our luggage to "the village," and with difficulty restrained from seizing and running off with it in every direction. I succeeded at last in piling it all snugly at one side of the wooden platform: my wife and the two little boys seated themselves on the top as sentinels, while I walked up the hill to the town, a mile distant, to seek for a new home and the means of living in it.

I hurried up the brick-paved road and through the streets until the sign "Cabinet-maker" over a door met my eye. I entered, and in a painful state of suspense inquired for the boss, who "guessed he didn't want a hand." The same unsatisfactory reply awaited me at two other places. There now remained but the last of the boss cabinet-makers in the town; if unsuccessful this time, what a hopeless prospect presented itself, without the means of travelling farther, or of paying for a single night's lodging! I hesitated some minutes at the door of the shop, afraid to ask the question on which so much depended, when "Go ahead," shouted by one teamster to another on the opposite side of the street, again attracted my notice, and I entered. To my inquiry for work the boss, a pleasant talkative little man, replied favourably, though not without circumlocution. He began by saying, without giving me time to speak, "Guess you're from the old country, aint you? Did you hang out in New York? What do you think of our country? Is King Billy as smart a man as General Jackson? Your Thames aint a circumstance by the side of our North River, eh? Well, I guess we're considerable busy, so you may come to work to-morrow."

Glad and grateful, I left the shop I had entered but a few minutes before with so much dread, and, relieved of my most pressing anxiety, walked cheerfully through the streets in search of a lodging. None, however, was to be found—not a single vacant room could I hear of; and unwilling as I was to incur the expense of a temporary residence at a boarding-house, it was the only alternative. Having secured this, as the sun was sinking behind the Shawangunk mountains, far away on the other side of the river, I descended the hill up which I had walked four hours before, and gladdened my wife with the news of my success. Our little boys had amused themselves for some time, until, becoming tired and hungry, they cried themselves to sleep; from which they were soon awakened, and the services of a carman being engaged, were speedily removed with our other effects to the boarding-house: the charge for the operation took away half of our solitary half dollar.

The next morning I was early at the workshop; courage and hope nerved my arm, and I determined to struggle through every obstacle. In the afternoon of this day a cruel and absurd custom compelled me to part with my last coin to pay "footing." Strange that the goodwill of shopmates cannot be extended to the stranger without this initiatory process! How often does it happen that a distressed mechanic has sacrificed

what would buy a meal for his family, to gratify the depraved appetites of those who will be friends or enemies in proportion to the strength and quantity of the liquor they swallow! This bad custom does not prevail to so great an extent in America as in our own country; and it is to be hoped that, with many other vicious drinking habits, it will soon become altogether obsolete.

Two weeks passed away, and I found myself in possession of a few dollars beyond my weekly expenses. A lodging was found at last, and joyfully taken possession of: it was but one room, somewhat dingy and fly-stained withal; but half a peck of lime, and the occupation of a few over-hours, soon gave the apartment a clean and cheerful aspect. A few bundles of straw, brought home on returning from work, filled the bed, which was laid in one corner of the floor, and with the old sea-chest in the middle for a table, we began the world anew, under circumstances very similar to those of our beginning two years before.

The next week we were able to purchase a table and bedstead, to which I added a stray chair from the workshop, that no one would claim; the crockery on the shelves was efficiently increased; the chests were removed to one side, the boxes put out of sight under the bed, so that the room began to assume a more comfortable appearance; and not least in our sources of contentment was the improvement in the health of my wife and children from breathing the pure air of the country.

Never had I got through so much work in an ordinary day as now. Determined to recover my losses, not a minute was suffered to pass unimproved. I rose very early, and leaving my family asleep took my food in a basket to the workshop, from which I did not return until the evening. This was the hour of repose and relaxation; the refreshing tea was always ready, accompanied with stewed fruit, or savoury johnny cakes. Then there were the events of the day to talk about; the travels of the boys into the neighbouring fields furnished an exhaustless subject of conversation; one had fallen into the narrow creek, and got nicely wetted before he could scramble out again; the other had chased grasshoppers till he was so hot, and red, and tired, that he would rather go to bed than sit at the table. One day a tree had been climbed; the next, a means of getting over a fence which had long baffled them, was discovered; and the tempting blackberries schemed down within reach of the young adventurers; the boys grew and thrived to the great joy of their parents. At times a book afforded recreation; or a quiet stroll in the cool moonlight, under trees made vocal with the chirp of the katydids, reinvigorated us after the exhaustion of a scorching day, while it lent another pleasure to our country life, which seemed all the happier when compared with the confinement of a city.

At the end of five months, when the days grew shorter and the evenings dark, I found myself the possessor of sixty dollars—the result of diligence and economy. Work, however, began to slacken; the boss threw out hints of dismissal; one "hand" was discharged, then another, and at last it came to my turn, softened, however, by the promise of being "taken on again at Christmas." This was a sudden check to the tide of prosperity, and a new source of disquietude, the more felt as all the other employers in the town were pursuing the same course, and consequently narrowing the resources. The lateness of the season, too, rendered additional expense necessary for fuel and other protection against the coming winter.

At this time a letter came from the relative to whom my savings had been lent, professing ability to perform his engagements under circumstances that rendered it necessary I should go to receive the amount in person. This involved a journey of some two hundred miles, which, after some consideration, I determined on, and starting by one of the night boats for Albany, reached my destination, a small village on the banks of the Mohawk, the next day.

Here, to my vexation, I learned that my friend had gone on a journey from which he would not return for several days; the delay, though unexpected, was not all loss. I made acquaintance with some students o the village grammar school, was admittec to hear their examinations and recitations and in the company of one of them madc many excursions up the hills behind th settlement, and away into the solitude of th forests; or starting on the banks of the creel that dashed down the declivity, we followec all its windings and explored all its nois rapids to the source. I went also on a shor trip by the railway to the flourishing an handsome city of Utica.

At length, after three weeks, my frien returned, but, unfortunately for me, quit unable to fulfil his promises; the recover of the money appeared to be hopeless. took a hasty farewell of the young ma whose society had enabled me to pass th time usefully and agreeably, and returned t Poughkeepsie, only one day before a sudde

change of wind completely closed the navigation of the upper course of the Hudson. The resource of reading now proved of infinite service; the weather forbade out-of-door exercise, and I gained instruction while waiting for the opportunity to bring that instruction into practical use.

The boss still held out hopes of work, and as a drowning man will clutch at weeds, so did I cling to this as a compensation to come when the evil days should be over; but the evil days took no ending, and in spite of my efforts to the contrary, I became depressed. Gloomy feelings came over me as I thought upon the long bitter months to come; the sixty dollars, too, which had been greatly diminished by my fruitless journey to the west, were fast disappearing. I tried every means to obtain employment, and offered to work in exchange for food, but in vain; and to crown all, Christmas came, but the promised work came not with it.

This was the climax; I counted the contents of our scanty purse, and small indeed was the sum that remained. My resolution was taken; I bought a load of firewood, sawed, splitted, and then piled it in one corner of our room, to avoid the inconvenience of fetching it from out of doors in the snow or biting wind, and carefully stopped all the chinks and openings in the walls and door to exclude the cold. I then laid in a small store of salt pork and potatoes, and with a wallet on my shoulder, and one dollar in my pocket, started before daylight on the morning of Christmas Day, after a sorrowful leave-taking, to walk eighty miles over the hills to New York, where I doubted not of meeting with some sort of occupation that would enable me to support my family until the return of the genial season should bring its attendant plenty and prosperity.

As I closed the outer door of the house, I seemed to lose half of the courage that had hitherto animated me. The morning was dark and starless; heavy clouds obscured the sky; the sullen roar of the ice drifted up and down by the tide in the distant river was wafted drearily to my ears; everything seemed to be in accordance with the depression of my feelings; and after walking about an hour my reflections became so painful that I turned round to retrace my steps. The feeling, however, was but temporary; "Go a-head" came to my mind; I fancied, like Curran, that my little boys were pulling in the other direction, and once more turned my face to the south. To add to my discomfort, with the appearance of daylight it began to rain, at first slightly, then heavier, and at last settled into a "downright pour;" in these circumstances I did not find climbing and descending the hills quite so pleasant a pastime as the admiring them from the deck of the steamer had been in the previous month of June.

I toiled on; the driver of the New York stage, which I met creeping along at a snail's pace, informed me that a few miles farther on the road was completely flooded. After walking thirty miles I felt so jaded from the constant soaking and bad condition of the roads that I stopped at a tavern by the road side just at night-fall. Here I found a welcome seat by the side of the bar-room stove; and much to my satisfaction learned that, the river being still navigable below the highlands, a steamer would start the next day for New York from a village at their southern extremity.

Morning came, but brought with it no cessation of the rain, which was pouring down as furiously as ever. Delay was out of the question; the tavern charge for bed and board had absorbed half of my dollar; I was still fifty miles from the city; and if I missed the steam-boat there was the prospect of becoming penniless before I could walk to the end of my journey. I set out, and at the foot of the first hill found the water dashing and roaring across the road with the fury of a cataract: here was a stop. I looked in vain for a passage; wading was not to be thought of; the great depth of the water, to say nothing of its impetuosity, presented an insurmountable obstacle, while the sides of the road falling away with a sudden declivity, rendered going round equally impracticable. Go a-head appeared now to be ineffective, when at last I discovered a portion of a dyke or stone fence occasionally visible above the surface of the torrent. Cautiously climbing upon this, I stood for a minute calculating my chances; the stream hissing through the interstices caused the stones to tremble at the passage of every wave, and on the other side plunged suddenly down a descent of fifty feet; a false step might be fatal. I carefully felt my way, and accomplished the passage in safety; then pushing on, I encountered another torrent in the next hollow; this, however, not so formidable, was passed by wading, and I reached the river at last; and just as the steamer was leaving the landing, stepped on board.

Dripping with wet, I took my seat by the cabin fire, from which I did not rise until the arrival of the vessel at New York the same evening. The payment of my fare left me but six cents in my pocket, and with

this sum, in the midst of a snow-storm, I walked on shore. I went at once to the lodging of my former French shopmate, and on a corner of his floor passed the night. The next day was devoted to looking for work, the next, and the next, but in vain. I offered to do any kind of work that would leave me a trifle beyond my bare expenses; the invariable reply was, "there will be no work till spring."

I pass over the dreary thoughts that troubled me. On the evening of the third day I met with a friend, who invited me to his house, and whose kindness enabled me to send a five-dollar note, with a few words of hope and encouragement, to my lonely and expectant wife. My friend was one of the few who, with the acquisition of the means, retain the disposition to do good. He gave me temporary work, and I eventually obtained a profitable situation in his service, which I retained during the remainder of my stay in America.

Spring came; the ice disappeared from the river, and with feelings far different from those with which I had come to the city four months before, I went back to Poughkeepsie and returned with my family, now increased by the addition of a little girl, who to our great grief was taken from us in the following summer. As the months went by our prospects brightened; I resumed my nightly labours, and in a short time our apartments were furnished to our hearts' content. My new situation afforded me the valuable privilege of enrolling myself a member of the 'Mercantile Library Association,' a flourishing institution, where an annual payment of two dollars secured access to a library of 20,000 volumes, and to a course of lectures by some of the most scientific men of the country.

I had seen the great fire in the winter of 1835-6, but was now to witness a more alarming convulsion in the commercial panic of 1837. All business was at a stand; bankruptcy followed bankruptcy with bewildering rapidity; the banks suspended specie payments, and hard coin became as scarce as diamonds. It was next to useless going to market with a five-dollar note—no one could or would give change. Many tradesmen issued notes for sums as low as six cents, in order to be able to meet the daily necessities of retail business; and this illegal paper, under the name of "shin plasters," was for a long time current in the city. All these disasters were the consequence of the inordinate haste to be rich of the preceding years.

During this and the following year the letters we received from England conveyed urgent and apparently favourable inducements for our return. After mature deliberation we resolved on accepting the proposals, and on the 20th May, 1839, nearly five years from the time of our arrival, we embarked on board the Gladiator, one of the "liners," with a fair wind, and ere sunset of the same day the land in which we had lived so long with varied fortune, where we found friends in adversity and hopes in prosperity, had disappeared from our view below the western horizon.

We had left behind us the people whose activity and enterprise are indefatigable; whose prudence inclines to the side of profit; whose morality succumbs to their acquisitiveness; whose benevolence exceeds their conscientiousness; whose anticipations of the future are as great as they may be glorious, with the recognition of the unchanging principles of human right, human dignity, and moral truth.

The fair wind continued: our vessel proved herself worthy of the swift-sailing line to which she belonged; and in nineteen days from the time we passed Sandy Hook, at noon on a pleasant Sunday, we saw the high cliffs of England, the Bill of Portland being the first point visible, and at nightfall on the same day we passed inside the Needles and dropped our anchor at the Motherbank.

The next morning we were all up early to look upon the green woods and fields of our native land. A boat from the shore was steering towards us; when alongside an officer rose in the stern and inquired of our captain the name of his vessel, her port of departure and destination, and the number of his crew. To this latter question he replied "thirty," while the actual number was but eighteen.

As we were passing Ryde, one of the sailors, an American, remarked that "it was a very pretty settlement," and was well laughed at for applying a backwoods' designation to a town of the old world. Nearly all our cabin passengers landed at Portsmouth, from whence we sailed pleasantly along the coast, and in the afternoon of the following day disembarked at St. Katherine's Dock, where we experienced equal civility, with less examination of our baggage than on our landing in New York.

The hopes which had led us once more across the Atlantic were not realised: the disappointment was great, but it has been subsequently compensated by a situation whose duties are as genial as they promise to be permanent.

FEB 27 1930